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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 041806

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING RECRUITMENT OF STRONG UNMIS LEADERSHIP

REF: A. STATE 17092

- [1B.](#) STATE 7222
- [1C.](#) ACCRA 489
- [1D.](#) STATE 1335
- [1E.](#) KHARTOUM 543

[11.](#) This is an action request. Please see para. 6

[12.](#) Background: The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is the UN peacekeeping operation mandated to monitor and support implementation of Sudan's historic Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended 21 years of civil war between northern and southern Sudan when it was signed on January 9, 2005. Under the CPA, the parties to the agreement (e.g. the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM)) are provided a six-year interim period during which a census, national elections, and a referendum on the South's determination to secede or remain part of a united Sudan will take place. Sudan's national census, a milestone under the CPA, is scheduled to take place April 22 (May 6). Also, the international community is eagerly anticipating planning for the 2009 national elections. Sudan's disputed oil-rich border region of Abyei continues to see an escalation of tension and violence between local Misseriya tribes, local Dinka Ngok, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) elements, as the Presidency continues dialogue on resolving the problem.

[13.](#) Two key positions within UNMIS are undergoing transition. The position of Deputy Senior Representative of the Secretary General (D/SRSG), formerly held/soon to be vacated by Taye Zerihoun, has not been officially filled. In addition, the tour of UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) Force Commander Lt. General Jasbir Singh Lidder ended on/about April 8, 2008 (reftel A,B). The loss of UNMIS staff is particularly unfortunate at this time when respected leadership is crucial to fulfillment of the UNMIS mandate amidst civil and military challenges.

[14.](#) The Department is unaware of formal announcements related to the replacement of either position, but has heard rumors about and received endorsements for potential candidates. The Washington SPLM mission reported to the Department its understanding that Mr. Azouz Ennifar, D/SRSG for the UNMEE mission, would replace Zerihoun and expressed its concern over the appointment of a Muslim individual given the tense Muslim/Christian environment in Sudan (Note: The SPLM was equally disappointed with the appointment of SRSG Qazi because of his Muslim religious and cultural affiliation; the SPLM was not consulted on his appointment, either. End note). With respect to the replacement of FC Lidder, the Department has not been informed of potential candidates, but has received requests to endorse at least one West African military commander (reftel C). While we are taking these comments on board, we do not see any reason to break with our usual policy in this case. Proposed TALKING

POINTS:

z UNMIS is making a difference on the ground in Southern Sudan, due in large part to the presence of capable and competent staff.

z The continued provision of such fully functioning and capable UNMIS staff is crucial for implementation of the CPA, as well as for maintaining the achievements of the UNMIS operation thus far.

z The D/SRSG and FC positions cannot remain vacant during this critical period. Moreover, they should be filled by individuals capable of undertaking the massive responsibilities of the CPA, including possessing the ability to work productively with the constituents of the CPA, namely the SPLM.

z With respect to the UNMIS FC, an appropriate candidate must be capable of moving forward on creative peacekeeping initiatives, such as the nascent JIU support cell (reftel D), and making progress amidst difficult circumstances, such as monitoring efforts in Abyei and increasing violence in Kordofan (reftel E).

z We recognize the complex difficulties associated with UNMIS and Sudan generally, but encourage the UN nonetheless to remain committed to a fully operational UNMIS. End points.

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¶5. ACTION USUN: Drawing from the Background and suggested Talking Points, Post is requested to approach the UN Secretariat and obtain information on prospective candidates

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and a timeline for the replacement of both D/SRSG Zerihoun and UNMIS FC Lidder. USUN is requested to underscore to the Secretariat the importance of finding appropriate and

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competent replacements for these individuals.
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